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RUEUITH/ODC ANKARA TU
INFO RUEHTH/AMEMBASSY ATHENS 7004
RUEHIT/AMCONSUL ISTANBUL 0013
RUEHDA/AMCONSUL ADANA 0487
RUEHBS/AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS 5152
RUEHBS/USEU BRUSSELS
RUEHNO/USMISSION USNATO 4859
RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK 1477
RUEUITH/DET 1 39LG ANKARA TU
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TAGS: [OPRC](#) [KMDR](#) [TU](#)
SUBJECT: ANKARA MEDIA REACTION REPORT
THURSDAY, MARCH 9, 2006

In Today's Papers

Justice Ministry to Investigate Prosecutor Charging General Buyukanit
All papers: The "mole" leaking information to the Van prosecutor which led to a clash between the judiciary and the military turned out to be the ruling AK Party lawmaker Musa Sivacioglu, who also chairs the parliamentary commission probing the Semdinli bombings. Sivacioglu admitted that he sent the transcript of the testimony of a local businessman who accused Land Forces Commander Yasar Buyukanit of forming a gang in the region between 1997 and 2000 to Van prosecutor Ferhat Sarikaya on February 16. The main opposition CHP party leader asked Sivacioglu to step down for leaking critical information to the prosecutor. Justice Ministry on Wednesday ordered the investigation into Prosecutor Sarikaya for attempting to undermine General Buyukanit, tipped to become the chief of Turkish General Staff (TGS) in August. Sarikaya had charged that the illegal group allegedly set up by Buyukanit was behind the bombing of a bookshop in the southeastern town of Semdinli last November with the aim of provoking the government into blocking freedoms for Kurds, thus jeopardizing Turkey's EU membership talks. The Van Bar Association denounced the investigation against Sarikaya as intervention in the proceedings of the judiciary. In a snap poll commissioned by Vatan, 70.5 percent of respondents said they do not believe the allegations against General Buyukanit. The survey, conducted by Sonar polling company, asked opinions of 1211 people in Ankara, Istanbul and Izmir. Of those polled 68.5 percent said Buyukanit should be appointed the chief of the TGS despite the allegations.

Iranian Ambassador Proposes Uranium Enrichment in Turkey
Hurriyet, Milliyet, Sabah, Cumhuriyet, Radikal, Zaman, Yeni Safak and others report Iran's Ambassador in Ankara, Firuz

Dowlatabadi, as telling the English-language daily The New Anatolian that Iran was ready to carry out uranium enrichment in Turkey. Dowlatabadi invited Turkish companies to join nuclear projects in Iran. He claimed that the US had long-term plans for the disintegration of Turkey, Iran and Saudi Arabia. Cumhuriyet comments that pressure from the West prompted the offer.

Commenting on the Iran issue in the tabloid Star, Washington-based Tulin Daloglu observes that two groups within the US government are debating the Iran case from different perspectives. Ms. Daloglu writes: "One group draws attention to the ideology of the Iranian regime and talks about a long standing struggle against the mentality represented by Iranian official ideology. The other group, on the other hand, expects a change of regime in Iran without intervention from outside. The same group also argues that the acquisition of nuclear weapons will start the process of the demise of the current regime. Considering Cheney's recent remarks on Iran, we still cannot argue that the current debate is over between the two groups within US agencies. However, there is something which both groups agree on: they both believe that there is unprecedented international support for the US on the Iran case. But this view does not reflect reality. There is nothing at the international public opinion at the moment to justify an American military operation against Iran."

US Human Rights Report

Hurriyet, Milliyet, Sabah, Vatan, Cumhuriyet, Radikal, Zaman, Yeni Safak and others report that the State Department Human Rights Report issued March 8 said torture, mistreatment, and restrictions on free speech and press

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continue in Turkey. Yeni Safak criticizes the US for reporting abuses by insurgents in Iraq while not mentioning at all the torture inflicted by US troops. Milliyet says the report cited the suits filed by Prime Minister Erdogan against political cartoonists. Vatan underlines that this year the report did not mention the influence of the military in politics in Turkey.

Annan Criticizes US, Baghdad Administration in Iraq Report
Cumhuriyet, Radikal and Zaman carry international wire reports that UN Secretary General Kofi Annan, in a report, accused the coalition forces and the Baghdad administration of breaching international law by arbitrarily detaining thousands of people in Iraq. Annan also expressed concerns over the prison system in Iraq.

TV Highlights NTV, 8 AM

Domestic News

- High Board to Combat Terrorism warned that the fundamentalist Turkish Hizbullah had begun recovering, and that thousands of PKK militants had spent the winter in Turkey for the first time in long years on the eve of Nevruz.

International News

- IAEA is to refer Iran to UN Security Council which will probably impose sanctions against Iran at a meeting next week.

- Belgian Prime Minister Guy Verhofstadt said the escape of leftist militant Fehriye Erdal has created the impression that Belgium was not pressing hard to fight terrorism.

- Britain's top military commander in Baghdad said the first pull-out of British troops from Iraq could begin in a matter of months, with a final withdrawal by mid-2008.

- The majority of Americans want Saddam Hussein executed if convicted, AP-Ipsos polling said. In eight other countries,

where the death penalty was abolished, the majority of people prefer that Hussein spend the rest of his life in prison.

- The Labor Party and the Socialist Party were the biggest winners in the Dutch local elections on Tuesday. Ninety Turks were elected to Dutch city councils.

Economy News

- Current deficit reaches USD 2.5 billion in January - 70 percent above the figure for the same month last year.

- The tourism sector in Turkey demands state support following the grant of government incentives to poultry producers and textile sector.

WILSON